

3-1994

125 Years of Children's Literature: From Alcott and Alger to Sendak and Seuss

State University of New York College at Cortland

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.cortland.edu/quasquicentennial_documents

Recommended Citation

State University of New York College at Cortland, "125 Years of Children's Literature: From Alcott and Alger to Sendak and Seuss" (1994). *Quasquicentennial (125th) Anniversary Documents*. 7.
https://digitalcommons.cortland.edu/quasquicentennial_documents/7

This Conference Proceeding is brought to you for free and open access by the Quasquicentennial (125th) Anniversary at Digital Commons @ Cortland. It has been accepted for inclusion in Quasquicentennial (125th) Anniversary Documents by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Cortland. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@cortland.edu.

*"125 Years of Children's Literature:
From Alcott and Alger to Sendak and Seuss"*

**Cortland College Children's Literature Conference
to Celebrate the College's 125th Anniversary
on
March 4th and 5th, 1994**



**Feedback Information
On the Three Keynote Speakers and on
The Conference in General**

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT CORTLAND

Russell Freedman
"Bring 'Em Back Alive:
Writing History and Biography for Young People"
Friday's General Session

Direct quotes taken from the written feedback forms:

"I don't know how you do it - but keep doing it - your books are of tremendous value to young and older than young!

"You made me want to take detailed notes on all you said, which I did, in the form of a letter to an acquaintance in Western New York who could not be here."

"Same talk I've heard him give before - still good."

"Very enjoyable and informative! I loved his stories about Abraham Lincoln and the Roosevelts."

"Good explanation of how important it is to bring history to life."

"He was a good start to the conference. His remarks about the art of nonfiction need to be heard because too much emphasis is placed on just imaginary reading. Students need both."

"Very inspirational. Mr. Freedman's presentation was engaging, humorous and informative. He made me want to go home and read more nonfiction."

"Very insightful and entertaining! I loved hearing about the research and travel that he's done to complete a book."

"Terrific, wonderful, inspiring. Loved the personal anecdotes about his own process of creating. He was so obviously excited about researching and learning and creating while writing."

"Excellent presentation."

"Thank you for talking about serendipity - So many times we forget as teachers and learners the value of reading / researching / loving about things / people you are passionate about."

"Interesting - I'm looking forward to reading some of his books, particularly about native Americans."

"Informative" (twice)

"Great use of anecdotes and very interesting to learn about his writing process."

"Very good. Enlightening/entertaining way of presenting material. Learned some interesting things!"

"Nice presentation - good insights on how he writes his books."

"Enjoyed talk. Want to read more of his books."

"Very interesting talk! Your serendipity samples!"

"Interesting and informative! I liked the comments he made about writing."

"Very interesting!"

"Freedman's warm and interesting presentation offered an interesting framework for appreciating his books."

"Very good."

"Excellent speech - very interesting - It will be great to be able to tell my students about Mr. Freedman and the writing process."

"Many amusing anecdotes in the presentation. It was interesting to hear how Mr. Freedman writes and the importance of revision."

"Your 'off the cuff' very down to earth presentation was wonderful. You really do make your subjects come alive again.!"

"Interesting anecdotes - a bit dull - as far as style."

"So interesting, should consider working on an autobiography."

"Have you ever considered writing an autobiography?"

"I found it very interesting when he talked about how he researched his books. I was also glad that he took questions!"

"Wonderful antidotes. Pleasing insight into a writer's world! Hard to hear at times."

"Very interesting and amusing."

"He did make it come alive. I was fascinated with his research and serendipity stories."

"Thanks for sharing serendipity! I in turn shared it with my family. I am so glad to have your nonfiction to share with children and enjoy myself."

"Mr. Freedman gave interesting facts as to how he went about putting biographies together. It amazed me how much time and travel went into the research."

"I enjoyed hearing Mr. Freedman describe his field research and writing process. Many of his heroes are my heroes."

"Excellent!"

Shelley Harwayne
*"Placing Literature at the Heart of All We Do:
Our School's Commitment"*
Saturday's First General Session

Direct quotes taken from the written feedback forms:

SUPERB! (as I said to you afterwards)

"Heard her before, but still good."

"I would love to visit your school. Thank you for telling us that we don't need to be experts."

"Excellent - Loved her examples."

"Enjoyed her enthusiasm for poetry and how nice to see all the children's selections."

"Excellent! Inspirational! Energetic! A role model for us all."

"Inspired me personally to write, which in turn will be reflected in my classroom."

"Unbelievably inspiring, fascinating - wished we'd got a bit more time for actual recommended titles for reference. Loved all the kid examples - loved the theoretical background of community and caring as the essential background.

"Excellent / inspiring"

"WOW! Very inspirational at stressing the true essence of education: Focusing and celebrating the creativity of children. Thank you, Shelley Harwayne, for your words of wisdom."

"Excellent and inspiring!! I'm so glad I was able to hear Shelley speak!"

"Outstanding speaker - highly inspirational."

"Shelley's philosophy permeates every aspect of her school and I applaud and admire her (their) willingness and ability to reflect and alter based on their philosophy. Her talk had a profound impact on me."

"Informative, inspiring, and fun!!

"Very good!"

"Very interesting information."

"Good selection for a speaker! Had something to say."

"Excellent and inspiring presentation. Thanks for the ideas and inspirations."

"Dynamic and realistic - Talk about modeling! Children's writing added authenticity."

"Excellent and encouraging to hear about real life situations. Enthusiastic."

"Very impressed with the talk. I would love to come see Shelley talk again - I would love to see her school - and I would love to have a mentor like her."

"Great, inspiring presentation. I'm anxious to read Shelley's book and would love to hear her speak at greater length."

"A wonderful presentation. I would love to visit your school!"

"Very interesting. A wonderful speaker. Excellent overhead examples."

"An excellent speaker, an inspiration to all teachers and their accomplishments."

"A delightful presentation full of inspiration and sensibility. You come across as being an admired fellow teacher and/or a desirable friend next-door!"

"Wonderful examples of student work; An explicit, concrete explanation of the content and purpose of your talk included at the beginning of speech might focus thoughts/energy more effectively."

"A couple of ideas that I can use."

"I could have listened to her talk all day. I have both her books and still can't get enough."

"Excellent! thanks for the inspiration."

"Shelley was great. She had great ideas. It is always nice to hear new ideas and see such enthusiasm. I am hoping to get to her conference in Rochester."

"I found Shelley not only a wealth of knowledge but fascinating, interesting, and witty. I'm not a teacher but an aspiring writer and thoroughly enjoyed her lecture."

"It was such a pleasure to hear someone explain what school really should be."

"I thought she was wonderful\1 She spoke to many of the issues we are dealing with now. I loved listening to her delightful presentation and talking to her afterwards."

"Excellent - I would love to visit your school. I love how you have and had use all of the children's work."

"Bravo! May the commitment be looong lived."

"She's inspirational."

"I admire her involvement and dedication to literature - good presentation."

"I love her commitment to what she considers "seniors schoolwork" and the fact that it is child-centered learning."

"Interesting ideas for the integration of writing and literature into the school program for stimulating total communication skills. Worthwhile."

"Excellent"

"Excellent presentation. Useful info - wonderful, practical examples."

"Very inspiring."

"Your school sounds wonderful - I think the "writing" atmosphere must be so enjoyable to be in - I believe more and more in children writing, especially young children."

"Wonderful! I loved her presentation. This must have been quite an undertaking but it sounds like a most exciting school!"

"Very inspiring and practical too! EXCELLENT"

"Convincing and inspiring...With her feet and mind headed the right way - she detailed a value and how to "get to" getting there."

"Thank you, Shelley, for inspiring each of us! Your delivery, examples, humor, and honesty are special and appreciated!"

"Inspiring, excellent specific suggestions which I will begin using Monday - even addressing letters home to "Dear Families", etc, etc. THANK YOU!"

"Inspirational - some good ideas to bring back and try."

"Loved it!! A real spark for me. Caring for each other - a helping environment - how very important. It sounds like a real school for and by kids. Wish I could visit you."

"Excellent - it's always useful to learn about how others do things"

"Excellent - many great ideas anyone can use next week in their classrooms or schools."

"Excellent!"

"Very inspiring. This renewed my desire to try to inspire my young writers to use more interesting language by way of a different genre."

"How inspiring! Shelley gave so many ideas of practical reasons for writing and left you with wishes for how you would like to change things in your school."

"Enjoyed her - I heard some good motivating ideas."

"Motivating, interesting - modeling is the key."

"Very interesting - I hope to order her book. I admire her courage to try something "new".

I like the idea of carrying a notebook around always - if possible."

"Excellent! Would be great to visit."

"Excellent!"

Jane Yolen
"All You Need to Know About Story"
Saturday's Second General Session

Direct quotes taken from the written feedback forms:

"Definition of story -- so helpful, useful, memorable! Ant thank you for the needed emphasis on poetry!"

"Excellent - wonderful to hear her."

"Wonderful. Love questions and answers thoughts on poems in school."

"I would like to hear her speak about a particular book (or several books) developed. What is the evolution of story for her?"

"She made me think! Thank you."

"Interesting thoughts on writing, reading, and learning."

"Seemed a little tired, like she had a hard time bringing her same old speech to life again - but she's greatly forgiven - the content was strong. I like her directness in question answering."

"Very interesting speaker"

"Wonderful insight into the spirit of writing and experiencing stories - getting past the boundaries and into uncertainties."

"I will always treasure the story of the banicott. Thank you for writing and sharing yourself with the world."

"What a thrill! I look at all her works like old friends now. She was clever and funny, forthright and informative. I am so happy I met her."

"It was wonderful to see and hear her. She's an inspiration!"

Super! It's so wonderful to hear your viewpoints, approaches, insights."

Great!!

"A great encounter with a very talented 'artist'."

"Down to earth but grounded in her marvelous repository of experience."

"I wish that more classroom teachers from my building were here to hear this."

"A pleasurable experience."

"Very good. Poetry is something I will use more."

"Jane Yolen was interesting. Thank you."

"As always you were wonderful. A great 'story' teller."

"Excellent! She really lived up to my expectations!"

"Writing should be from the heart, though we keep teaching our children only the technical terms and positioning of wording. Writing is not a chemical formula, it is words from one heart to touch another in some form."

"She is such a nice and energetic person. She talked very humorously and kept the audience interested! Very good!

"Another great job Jane!!"

"Speech was thought provoking but discussion was even more so."

"Wonderful of course."

"Inspiring. I enjoyed the new insight into story."

"Jane seems to be an interesting person. She is very simplistic yet very complex with her thoughts and ideas. She really is an inspiration."

"Her talk was so fascinating one could hear a pin drop (quite a trick with all the men and women). I met Jane in 1977 at an Elderhostel at U. of Mass., Amherst, Ma. Was looking forward to seeing this caring, thoughtful lady again - it was great!"

"What a pleasure to meet and to hear her speak."

"Considering this is the end of her tour, you would think that she wouldn't have to read her script. Question and answer session was fabulous."

"Jane Yolen is such a gift. I really want her to know that The Devil's Arithmetic is one of those rare books that go on and live inside me no matter what other books/times elapse."

"Pretty heady!"

"Jane Yolen is an inspirational speaker. I feel lucky to have heard her."

"Interesting but not as inspired as her usual - probably due to being the last leg of a conference schedule."

"A top speaker - informs while entertaining. Clearly presents her ideas of what food children's literature is."

"Excellent presentation - inspiring."

"Good."

"Wonderful - you could have heard a pin drop!"

"Excellent - very real and helpful."

"I agree that story is easier to tell what it is not - rather than to define what it is!"

"Wonderful. Very interesting."

"So glad to hear read, read, read and not so concerned about grammar and such."

"What a wonderful example of fine use of language. Deserved a better introduction."

"WONDERFUL! Educated discussion."

"Witty, wonderful plays with words. Thank you for taking the time for questions and answers."

"Great"

"Thank you. I got some nice words and information to take back to my kids. They love your books."

"Excellent - leaves us with an uplifting message to go back to our schools and use literature in different or reaffirming ways."

"Interesting perspective on stories and writing. Really causes you to pause and think."

"OK - not a dynamic speaker - I don't agree or understand some of her points. She promotes ideas that were opposite of what I learned in the morning workshop."

"Personal touch is necessary to make speaking interesting. I enjoyed when you added personal touches. I wish I enjoyed reading as much as you do - maybe you have inspired me!"

"Great"

"Heartwarming! Encouraging to keep going in the direction I'm going - trying to develop a love of reading through reading real books with personal interpretation."

An excellent speaker who helped open my eyes to story!"

"Very good."

My overall reaction to the conference....

"I wish it could go on for a week!"

"Nice combination, good job".

"The authors and enthusiastic teacher presenters were terrific. An excellent conference. Please have it again.!"

"It was excellent. Thank you!"

"Excellent speakers."

"Worthwhile and educational"

"Terrific - wonderful combination of keynote speakers - history, fiction, and poetry. Harwayne - a teacher of teachers."

"Wonderful experience -- Bravo!"

"Worthwhile! As a student it's great to have affordable opportunities such as this, right on campus."

"Very well done is an understatement. Thank you."

"Dear Conference Committee, Thank you for a wonderful opportunity to learn and grow and exchange ideas. The conference was superb!"

"The Children's Literature conference was the highlight of this year for me. To be among creative, caring teachers of language arts, prolific writers, and to have the opportunity to see a splendid adaptation of *Little Women* - Heaven! I cried through Act I for it was my favorite childhood book."

"Place mats and book marks - one of many great ideas! Well organized to the last details. My only suggestion is more time between sessions for many reasons!"

"Very good -- food, location, everything."

"Excellent! Well organized, smoothly run. Please do make something of this nature an annual event."

Very good - will be looking forward to annual conference. I hope the cost will stay reasonable as many school budgets are in serious trouble - we have to pay for our own."

"Excellent! Next year - How about inviting regional authors of which there are quite a few in the Ithaca and Syracuse area?"

Excellent! The addition of the play was wonderful.

"The conference, for the attention given to poetry and art and the whole idea of creativity, was an inspiration."

"It was a great conference. I hope you will be able to continue something like this. Maybe tie it in with your Teacher Appreciation Program in the fall!"

"I loved this conference - excellent speakers - lunch was great - very well organized - I would love it if you had this annually. It would be nice if you sent a flyer to Alumni - my school received one, but it was by chance that I came across it and it would have been terrible to miss it. Thanks for all your work to make this a great conference. By the way I have two degrees from SUNY Cortland."

"Wonderful. What a conference?"

"Materials provided by Boyds Mills Press were absolutly wonderful!! Please thank them! I think the conference provided me many practical ideas I could use in my classroom! Possibly next time they could fit in more time for workshops?

"It was worth it."

"What a priviledge to have such high caliber speakers as Jane and Shelley. Thank you."

A great conference! Well organized! Great facilities. Great speakers. Let's do it again!"

"The conference was very worthwhile! It is so nice to get new ideas and meet new people! Maybe next year we could get Eric Carle, Bill Martin Jr., and/or Robert Munsch!"

"I was not disappointed in any way. It was well organized. The two classes great, the lunch above average. It was one of the smoothest I've attended in quite a while!"

"A wonderful, well-run, well-organized event. I wish all my Saturdays could be this well spent!"

Nice conference. Sorry I had another committment and had to leave early."

"Please - your directions, once you get on campus, need to be better. You need bigger signs and you need better directions to the parking lots. Next year when you send out your "initial" information, it would be beneficial if you would say what the workshops would be. We were not informed this year until the final mailing came and we really feel that you didn't have enough variety in the primary area."

"A wonderful success -- so much effort -- so worthwhile!"

"Wonderful! Do it again."

"Very wide range of presentations."

"Great - Do it again!"

"Yolen and Lindauer made this conference worth attending - in total - well done well planned conference."

"Excellent - Please do it again!"

"Shelley Harwayne was excellent! So was Jane." Not enough primary sessions. How about some multi-age presentations at a future date? (nongraded school)"

"Very nicely done!"

"Excellent conference! Thank you!"

